

Dear Members of the Applicant Review Panel,

As you know, and have dutifully implemented, California voters set up an extremely rigorous system of conflict of interest rules and safeguards for potential members of the Citizens Redistricting Commission when they approved Proposition 11.

Just as every fortress has a weak point, every conflict of interest safeguard has a blind spot. The easiest, and most obvious, protection against someone with improper motives getting on the Commission is to simply ask each applicant two questions: (1) who suggested they apply for the Commission, and, (2) once they were thinking about applying, who either encouraged them to apply or helped them with advice regarding their application materials.

Clearly, there is no place on the Commission for someone whose main motivation for applying was the encouragement of his or her friend the state legislator or political party organizer. The only way to uncover such issues is to ask. Proposition 11's safeguards likely already blocked most of those willing to lie in their answer (or at least hopefully blocked those who are any good at lying). I suspect that any remaining "plant" is desperately hoping the Panel will not ask those questions.

And so, I request that you ask the following two brief questions of each applicant: who first suggested that you apply for the Commission? And who, if anyone, encouraged you to apply and/or assisted you with advice or wording on your application materials?

Thank you,

- Doug

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